



# Chapter 4 | Community Facilities & Infrastructure

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Editor's Note: This draft content chapter does not reflect final layout or formatting. Comments from the draft review will be incorporated upon receipt. Microsoft Word is used for drafts only and is not used for final layout.



## INTRODUCTION

The County provides high quality amenities and services and participates in partnerships or funding agreements with other community organizations, authorities, or governmental entities. The County ensures that existing facilities and infrastructure are sufficiently maintained to support the needs of the community, and that future needs are anticipated, planned, and fiscally programmed.

To continue providing the services, facilities, and infrastructure needed to support a high quality of life for a growing population, a deliberate effort is needed to first coordinate what is presently accomplished by the County and partner institutions. The Comprehensive Plan is the first step to a coordinated planning effort. The next step is in-depth planning studies that identify the County's needs in an organized structure. These planning studies include documents such as master plans, facility needs studies, and water source studies that include existing conditions, needs, future capacity, maintenance, and funding.

This chapter addresses existing public service conditions in the County today, and outlines objectives and strategies to provide for future improvements.

### Relationship to the Capital Improvements Program (CIP)

The Comprehensive Plan inventories and assesses existing facilities and infrastructure, identifies present and future needs, goals, and objectives, and develops an implementation plan to meet set expectations. With respect to facilities and infrastructure, the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) is the principal implementation tool for fiscal planning, prioritizing capital projects in Rockingham County over a five-year horizon in accordance with four primary criteria: its compliance with the Comprehensive Plan, the importance of the project, the County's ability to finance the project, and its level of prioritization. The Capital Budget is used as a tool to annually implement the CIP and Comprehensive Plan.



## EXISTING CONDITIONS | COMMUNITY FACILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE TODAY

### Infrastructure & Utilities

#### Water and Sewer

Public water and wastewater utilities in Rockingham County are operated by the Department of Public Works. The County regulates design standards and construction specifications for the planning, design, and construction of water and sewer utilities for residential, commercial, and industrial development intended to connect to the County's utility system. The public sewer system is a combination gravity and force main system with 26 pump stations. A no-net-gain policy limiting the number of pump stations allowed in the County to 26 has been in effect for approximately 15 years. Therefore, new development would be required to include extensions and pump station capacity to take an existing pump station out of service.

##### Public Works

The Rockingham County Department of Public Works is responsible for the:

- Proper operation and maintenance of the water and sewer distribution systems.
- Efficient production of treated water at the Three Springs Water Treatment Plant (WTP)
- Daily operation of a solid waste disposal facility
- Daily operation of a recycling program
- Maintenance of County vehicles
- Maintenance of the County buildings
- Repair/replacement of County street name signs

Within the County's designated growth and development areas, all uses requiring water service should be served by public water, and all uses requiring sewage treatment should be served by public sewer. Outside of designated development and growth areas, all uses requiring water service and sewage treatment are served by public water and sewer where available or through private well and septic systems.

The County plans for water and sewer improvements including capacity increases through the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Maintenance, as well as smaller utility extensions, are performed on a regular basis as part of the yearly

water and sewer operating budget. Several capital improvement projects are planned to replace old water lines to increase capacity and redundancy, and to improve service for areas south of the City of Harrisonburg. Current and planned projects are designated in the County's CIP, available online.



## Map 4.1 | Water and Sewer Mains

[This map can be found in the Chapter 4 Map Package]

The sources of drinking water (both public and private) throughout Rockingham County include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. In compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act, Rockingham County presents annual water quality reports for water users. Water from surface sources is treated to make it potable, while groundwater may or may not have any treatment.

The County's public water and sewer distribution falls under the following districts, authorities, or systems:

- Countryside Sanitary District (water only)
- Harmony Hills System (water only)
- Lilly Subdivision Sanitary district (water only)
- Smith Creek Water and Waste Authority (water and sewer)
- Three Springs System (water and sewer)

Rockingham County operates the production of treated water for the public system at the Three Springs Water Treatment Plant located in McGaheysville. The County purchased four acres in McGaheysville in December 2018 to be used for an additional supply well for the Three Springs Water Treatment Plant. A large aquifer in the County's eastern area nearby provides water for the County-owned wells, and for water systems owned by two major industries: Merck & Co. and Molson Coors. An in-depth study and plan is needed to map the aquifer and protect groundwater sources in the South Fork Shenandoah River Valley.

The Towns of Elkton and Broadway operate their sewage and water treatment plants. [Broadway provides Timberville with wastewater treatment.](#) The Towns of Bridgewater, Dayton, Grottoes, [and](#) Mount Crawford, ~~and Timberville~~ operate their water treatment plants. Grottoes services septic systems throughout Town. Greater regional collaboration is needed to coordinate public water service for the County. Forming a water authority is a future goal to improve service and capacity as the County grows.

The Harrisonburg-Rockingham Regional Sewer Authority (HRRSA) is a public body organized under the provisions of the Virginia Water and Waste Authorities Act. HRRSA promotes the health and well-being of the local communities by providing reliable, efficient, and affordable wastewater treatment services.

HRRSA's collection and treatment facilities include the North River Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF) located near Mount Crawford, a pumping station serving the Town of Bridgewater, flow metering stations, and an interceptor system. The treatment facility cleans sewage and water so that they can be returned to the environment. Wastewater plants remove solids and pollutants, break down organic matter, and restore the oxygen content of treated water.



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Table 4.1 | Water and Sewer Service Area

Rockingham County Water/Sewer Service Area					
Overall System Information	Average Daily Treated	Permitted Treatment Production	Number of total connections	Maximum Production	System Condition
<b>Water</b>	2.93 MGD**	3.6 MGD	5,700	4.2 MGD	Good
Volume of water purchased from City of Harrisonburg (all connections) = 0.2 MGD					
<b>Wastewater</b>	3.1 MGD	5.6 MGD	6,200		Good*
County's allocation for capacity with HRRSA = 5.6 MGD					
*Overall system is adequate, but pump stations need upgrades and repairs					
Rt. 11 North is currently served by the City of Harrisonburg					
** MGD = million gallons per day					
Capacity Information					
<b>Water</b>					
Number of Water Tanks: 6					
Total tank storage capacity: 10.5 MG					
Number of Water Pump Stations: 4					
Miles of waterline: 123 miles					
Number of fire hydrants: 1,070					
<b>Sanitary Sewer</b>					
Number of Wastewater Lift Stations: 26					
Miles of sanitary sewer lines: 121					
Number of manholes: 2,965					

### Stormwater

The County currently owns and maintains one regional detention basin located on Taylor Spring Lane through the Lake Shenandoah Stormwater Control Authority (LSSCA). Based on the County's population growth projections and zoning regulations facilitating residential development at higher densities, additional stormwater control authorities may be created throughout the County as necessary to resolve runoff and localized flooding issues.

The Taylor Spring Detention Basin is a 6.7-acre regional detention basin on a 29-acre parcel. The naturally vegetated site includes a 19-foot-high earthen embankment, riser structure, and emergency spillway. The basin is not designed to permanently store water and will entirely drain within a few hours/days following a rain event. Future plans for the property include passive public uses, such as picnic areas, green spaces, and walking and biking trails that connect with existing trails on the Sentara RMH property.



### **Formation of the Lake Shenandoah Stormwater Control Authority (LSSCA)**

Neighborhoods bordering the headwaters of Congers Creek (a major tributary to Lake Shenandoah) started to experience periodic localized flooding from stormwater runoff. The severity of the problem was fully realized in the summer of 2010 following a series of significant rain events and the reported flooding of many homes and properties. In 2013, the County obtained a study of the watershed, stormwater flooding problems, and potential solutions. On July 17, 2019, the Rockingham County Board of Supervisors created the Lake Shenandoah Stormwater Control Authority (LSSCA) “for the purpose of providing for the acquisition, construction, operation and maintenance of a stormwater control system for the collection and transport of stormwater” [for lands within the Lake Shenandoah drainage area].

The LSSCA consists of two contributing watersheds: Congers Creek and Massanetta Springs, with a total drainage area of 2,501 acres, (3.9 square miles). Within the watershed there are more than 2,000 structures including 11 agricultural structures and more than 10 commercial properties. All residents and businesses located in the LSSCA pay a bi-annual stormwater fee of \$0.08 per square foot of rooftop area. Fees were collected starting in 2021 and shall end in 2030.

Based on the results of the watershed study to improve drainage, the County elected to pursue the first and most-beneficial solution and construct a regional stormwater detention basin. In September 2017, the County submitted a grant application to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) through the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM). In October 2020, the County purchased land for the proposed detention basin along Taylor Spring Lane. In February 2022 FEMA awarded a grant for project construction in the total amount of \$730,000 with a \$36,500 match from the County. Construction of the Taylor Spring Detention Basin began in July 2022 and was completed in April 2023.

## **Refuse and Recycling**

The Rockingham County Landfill is located on Greendale Road and is situated in both Rockingham County and in the City of Harrisonburg. The disposal areas of the landfill are located only within Rockingham County. The 285-acre property is owned and operated by the County to provide residents with safe and cost-effective waste disposal and recycling options. As required by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), the County has an approved plan for management of solid waste, which includes the landfill. Annual tonnage received at the landfill is currently 145,000 tons. In addition to the landfill, five container sites for disposal of recycling and garbage are located throughout the County.

As of January 2022, 7,938,766 cubic yards of space remain in the currently permitted landfill phase, providing space for approximately 35 more years. Landfill Phases 1 through 4 are estimated to be closed by the end of 2024. A new phase (5B) will be constructed in 2024-2025 with an approximate ten-year life span. Phase 5C will follow 5B as part of the landfill's long-term plan. The County owns land surrounding the current site that could potentially be used for further expansion.



Table 4.2 | Solid Waste Service Area

Rockingham County Solid Waste Service Area			
Landfill	Capacity Remaining	Annual Tonnage Received	Overall Condition
813 Greendale Road Harrisonburg	35 years	145,000	Good
Container Refuse & Recycling Site Locations			
Bergton 15163 Bergton Road			
Elkton 15836 Old Spotswood Trail			
Mauzy 142 Mayland Road			
Waggy's Creek 10748 Waggy's Creek Road			
Grottoes 1005 20th Street			

The County plans to continually improve and expand recycling options within the container sites. Community engagement input revealed that residents would like additional refuse and recycling collection sites. New services to further divert waste from the landfill should be studied for feasibility at the drop-off sites. New services might include compost collection, space for trade or resale of reusable items,

and other recycling solutions.

#### Map 4.2 | Solid Waste Recycling and Refuse Container Sites

[This map can be found in the Chapter 4 Map Package]

### Electricity

Electric service is provided to Rockingham County by Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative (SVEC), Dominion Energy, the Town of Elkton, and Harrisonburg Electric Commission. SVEC and Dominion Energy serve the largest territories in the County. Territory boundaries are regulated by the State Corporation Commission (SCC).

SVEC, the Town of Elkton, and Harrisonburg Electric Commission are electric distribution utilities. Dominion Energy provides electric generation in addition to distribution and sells electricity to the Town of Elkton and Harrisonburg Electric Commission. SVEC is a member and partial owner of Old Dominion Electric Cooperative (ODEC), from which it purchases power. ODEC and Dominion Energy generate power from baseload fuel sources that include natural gas, nuclear, and coal as well as several long-term solar, wind, biomass, and landfill gas projects to support development of renewable facilities.

Dominion Energy owns and operates most of the County's transmission lines, which are analogous to interstate highways. Everyone uses the transmission lines and benefits from them, while the electricity that runs through the transmission lines belongs to multiple utilities and is generated by different sources. The distribution utilities own the distribution infrastructure that brings electricity from the transmission lines to substations and individual properties.

While the electric grid infrastructure capacity is designed to accommodate growth, the utilities have not historically directly influenced land use planning, and the County works with the utilities to facilitate growth for residents and economic development. Utilities build their infrastructure with the expectation that growth can happen anywhere, and the substations are able to accommodate increased demand.

### Telecommunications

Recognizing that technology businesses are a main driver behind local economic growth, the County prioritizes the continued siting of modern telecommunications infrastructure. Additionally, these technologies allow Rockingham County Public Schools (RCPS) students to achieve their learning and homework tasks, open doors for residents to work and access



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online higher educational programs from home, and allow the County to maintain open lines of communication with residents.

In July 2021, the County entered into an eight-county regional agreement, in partnership with All Points Broadband, Dominion Energy Virginia, Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative (SVEC), and Rappahannock Electric Cooperative. This agreement was made possible by a grant funded partially by the Virginia Telecommunications Initiative (VATI), along with matching funds from each participating locality, to achieve universal fiber-to-the-home at a minimum speed of 100 Mbps (megabits per second) to all 7,600 unserved locations in Rockingham County. The County has committed five million dollars to this effort. The project will use the electric utilities for the middle mile run to each area, and All Points Broadband will be responsible for bringing fiber broadband to each location. This project began in August 2022 to be completed within a 36-month timeframe.

### ***Map 4.3 | Universal Broadband Access in Rockingham County<sup>1</sup>***

*[This map can be found in the Chapter 4 Map Package.]*

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<sup>1</sup> Editor's Note: The County will need to provide GIS data if it wishes for a broadband map consistent with other map formatting.





## **Community Facilities & Services**

### **County Administration**

Successful local government administration is the main objective of Rockingham County's Board of Supervisors, comprised of five members elected from designated election districts. The Board adopts the Comprehensive Plan, approves the CIP and the annual budget, sets the tax rate, enacts ordinances, and sets policy in accordance with all local, state, and federal laws. Administration and service delivery is the ultimate responsibility of the County Administrator, with the County's daily services and functions delivered with the assistance of departmental staff.

Rockingham County's Board of Supervisors and administration are committed to providing the highest quality of services transparently, efficiently, and effectively to County residents. Keeping the community consistently informed and engaged is an important aspect of this responsibility. The County maintains an active online presence for citizen information and engagement via the Rockingham County website featuring online services, GIS, and social media. The arrival of universal broadband in the coming years will open new doors for the County to leverage technology to continue building upon communication in innovative ways.

The County maintains its buildings in a state of repair and good operating condition, including upgrades, reconditioning, and improvements. The Capital Budget and Capital Improvement Program (CIP) are the budgetary tools used to strategically plan how to meet future needs to minimize and prevent threats to public safety. The County cooperates and collaborates with the City of Harrisonburg and the incorporated towns within the County to reduce costs and provide services to the regional community.

The Rockingham County Administration Building is located on East Gay Street in the City of Harrisonburg. The Administration Building is in excellent condition and houses the following departments: County Administration, County Attorney's Office, Commissioner of Revenue, Community Development, Engineering, Finance, Fire and Rescue, Human Resources, Information Technology, Public Works, Parks and Recreation, Treasurer, and Voter Registrar. If additional staffing is needed at the Administrative Center and that results in a need for additional space for staff, the most cost-effective solution would likely be construction of an addition on the east side of the Administrative Center that mirrors the addition on the west side.

### **Public Safety**

Rockingham County residents value their community as a safe place to live. Ensuring the community's safety is the top priority for the County's public safety departments which include the Sheriff's Office and Department of Fire and Rescue, along with shared services through the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Emergency Communications Center (HRECC). Rockingham County coordinates with the City of Harrisonburg and the incorporated Towns in the County to provide public safety services to the region's residents. This cooperation reduces response times and provides excellent, life- and property- saving services expediently. Continued cooperation and coordination between the City of Harrisonburg, Rockingham County, and the Towns will ensure that public services are designed and located to meet the needs of all residents.

### **Law Enforcement**



The Rockingham-Harrisonburg Regional Jail (RHRJ) and Rockingham County Sheriff's Office are located on Liberty Street in the City of Harrisonburg. The Sheriff's Office is a full-service, fully accredited law enforcement agency employing approximately 170 full-time and part-time deputies to provide services in the areas of Corrections, Operations, Investigations, and Administrative Services. The service area includes the County, City of Harrisonburg, and the incorporated Towns within the County. Effective law enforcement is a top priority and contributes to the high quality of life in the County; to that end, the Sheriff's Office collaborates with the police departments of the City of Harrisonburg, and Towns of Bridgewater, Broadway, Dayton, Elkton, Grottoes, and Timberville to provide law enforcement across these jurisdictions. Additionally, the Bridgewater Police Department provides law enforcement to the Town of Mount Crawford. As of 2022, the RHRJ and Sheriff's Office are at capacity in terms of utilized employee space availability; however, according to the Sheriff's Office, no additional space needs are anticipated because identified future staff needs are expected to be field personnel. The Sheriff's Office does not have any immediate significant identified facility needs.

Rockingham County, along with the City of Harrisonburg, became members of the Middle River Regional Jail Authority (MRRJA) in July 2015 to meet additional jail space needs. Augusta County and the Cities of Staunton and Waynesboro are the other localities comprising the MRRJA. Prior to 2015, Rockingham County and the City of Harrisonburg leased beds from MRRJA and other facilities as needed. MRRJA has consistently exceeded the rated capacity of 396 beds in recent years. The facility needs additional bed capacity and HVAC, laundry, kitchen, storage, and other core facility updates or expansion. In September 2020, the Commonwealth of Virginia Board of Local and Regional Jails (VBLRJ) approved a 400-bed expansion and renovation. In 2021 the Middle River Regional Jail Expansion and Renovation project (\$24,125,430) was approved by the Department of Corrections and added to the current list of local and regional jail capital projects in the state budget, for which the Commonwealth will provide 25 percent reimbursement of eligible costs.

The Virginia Department of Corrections (DOC) in early 2022 improved the consistency of transporting State-responsible inmates (those 60 or more days past sentencing) to DOC facilities in a timely manner. As a result, there is currently no overcrowding at Middle River Regional Jail or the Harrisonburg Rockingham Regional Jail. If the DOC can sustain their current practice, expansion needs will be abated for a few years.

Core facility upgrades and repairs (e.g., kitchen equipment, HVAC and lighting, entrance security, perimeter fencing, storage) that were to be part of the greater MRRJ project are now included in annual operating budget expenses.

### **Fire and Rescue Emergency Services**

Rockingham County's Department of Fire and Rescue has the primary responsibility to protect life and property from fires and other emergencies within the County. Cooperation and collaboration between the County and towns, and between the County and City of Harrisonburg are necessary to meet these goals. The Department is a combination system made up of ten volunteer fire departments, six volunteer rescue squads, over 300 fire and emergency medical service (EMS) volunteers, 128 full-time staff, and 25 part-time staff. The Department also includes the following specialized teams: Regional Hazardous Materials Team, SWAT Medics, Swift Water Rescue Team, and Technical Rescue Team.

The Department continually evaluates response time, service areas, and operating standards to ensure high levels of service. To that end, the department's EMS Strategic Plan proposes new stations near Fulks Run, Massanutten, and the southwest area of the County, along with



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a Class-A burn building. These facility expansions will necessitate an increase in both staff and volunteers, along with the expansion of training programs. The Strategic Plan additionally outlines goals for the department to reach professional accreditation to teach Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) and Advance EMT paramedic programs. The Plan is primarily focused on providing modern, comprehensive EMS services and facilities to meet current and future needs for Rockingham County.

Currently, the County has 19 Fire and Rescue Stations, with four owned by the County and the remainder owned by volunteer squads. The newest location, Fire and Rescue Station 10, opened in December 2022 on U.S. Route 11, just north of the Harrisonburg city limits. Two priorities for the County to ensure the continued provision of effective services include a potential relocation of the Southwest Area Response Station located near the City of Harrisonburg to improve response times and the renovation of the Elkton Area Response Station to add space for personnel and equipment.

Call volume at most of the Fire and Rescue Stations increased by one percent (1.0%) from 2020 to 2022 except for Bergton and Grottoes Rescue Stations, which increased by 1.25%, and McGaheysville Rescue, which increased by 1.50%. While not definitive, increased call volumes may indicate population growth, an aging population, or increased traffic incidents. Average increases in response times over the same three-year period fluctuated significantly from a 0.4-minute increase for Harrisonburg Rescue to a 6.23-minute increase for Bergton Fire (See Table 4.4). The EMS Strategic Plan will continue to be updated with current data trends to understand EMS needs throughout the County and how demographic or environmental conditions may be affecting services.

The County will continue to monitor demographic trends, staffing levels, facilities conditions, call volume, and response and reaction times on an annual basis to ensure that planning is being conducted proactively and in a manner that meets demonstrated need.

**Table 4.3 | Fire and Rescue Service Locations**

Fire and Rescue Service Locations	
Name	Address
Bergton Fire Company	18140 Crab Run Road, Bergton
Bridgewater Fire Company	304 N. Main Street, Bridgewater
Bridgewater Rescue Squad	10 Volunteer Drive, Bridgewater
Broadway Fire Department	117 North Central Avenue, Broadway
Broadway Emergency Squad	525 South Main Street, Broadway
Clover Hill Fire & Rescue	2100 Clover Hill Road, Dayton
East Rockingham Emergency Response Station*	99 Judy Lane, McGaheysville
Elkton Emergency Response Station*	14171 Spotswood Trail, Elkton
Elkton Fire Company	14717 Spotswood Trail, Elkton
Grottoes Fire Department	109 Third Street, Grottoes
Grottoes Rescue Squad	805 Augusta Avenue, Grottoes
Harrisonburg Rescue Squad	1700 Reservoir Street, Harrisonburg
Hose Company #4	210 East Rock Street, Harrisonburg
McGaheysville Fire Company	80 Stover Drive, McGaheysville
Fire and Rescue Station 10*	1589 North Valley Pike
Port Road Emergency Response Station*	2654 Port Republic Road, Harrisonburg
Singers Glen Fire Company	9410 Singers Glen Road, Singers Glen
Singers Glen Rescue Squad	9405 Singers Glen Road, Singers Glen
Timberville Fire Department	217 South Main Street, Timberville
* owned by Rockingham County	



Table 4.4 | Fire and Rescue Call Volume and Reaction Times



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Fire & Rescue	Call Volume Trends				Average Reaction Times in Minutes*			
Response Area	2020	2021	2022	Average Increase Over 3 Years	2020	2021	Mid-2022	Average Increase Over 3 Years
Bergton Fire	109	120	151	1%	5.35	6.03	7.30	6.23
Bridgewater Fire	871	889	872	1%	1.04	1.14	1.22	1.13
Broadway Fire	757	729	701	1%	1.29	1.25	1.21	1.25
Clover Hill Fire	397	314	322	1%	3.10	3.06	3.36	3.17
Elkton Fire	632	676	779	1%	0.49	0.52	0.52	0.51
Grottoes Fire	305	340	352	1%	0.37	0.38	0.21	0.32
Hose Company #4-Rock Street	914	980	994	1%	1.30	1.32	1.51	1.38
Hose Company #4-Port Republic Road	722	788	960	1%	1.21	1.40	1.33	1.31
McGaheysville Fire	588	685	747	1%	1.14	1.21	1.46	1.27
Singers Glen Fire	196	204	222	1%	4.36	5.26	4.30	4.64
Timberville Fire	361	364	646	1%	1.10	0.56	1.30	0.99
Bergton Rescue	122	111	132	1.25%	1.53	1.00	1.00	1.18
Bridgewater Rescue	1683	1914	1,973	1%	1.42	1.36	1.40	1.39
Broadway Rescue	2782	3095	3,378	1%	1.11	1.60	1.13	1.28
Clover Hill Rescue	889	975	937	1%	2.43	2.02	1.35	1.93
Elkton Rescue	1630	1797	2,011	1%	1.39	1.41	1.08	1.29
Grottoes Rescue	766	1004	1,091	1.25%	1.26	1.39	1.41	1.35
Harrisonburg Rescue	8271	9334	10,087	1%	0.37	0.43	0.39	0.40
McGaheysville Rescue	1642	2438	1,986	1.50%	1.22	1.20	1.15	1.19
Singers Glen Rescue	212	180	208	1%	2.25	1.00	1.44	1.56
					*These reaction times do not include no-response incidents			
Totals	23,849	26,937	29,404	1%	Reaction = time from call received to dispatch Response= time from dispatch to arrival			

## Map 4.4 | Fire and Rescue Stations

[This map can be found in the Chapter 4 Map Package]

## Emergency Communications

The Harrisonburg-Rockingham Emergency Communication Center (HRECC), located at 101 North Main Street in Harrisonburg, was established and opened for operation in 2005. HRECC is staffed with 52 employees and provides state-of-the-art 24-hour emergency and non-emergency communications services to the citizens of Rockingham County, its seven Towns, and the City of Harrisonburg.

## Education

### Rockingham County Public Schools

Rockingham County Public Schools (RCPS) is comprised of 15 elementary schools, four middle schools, four high schools, Massanutten Technical Center, and Rockingham Academy. Over 11,600 students are supported by nearly 2,000 full-time employees. In addition to public schools, the County is home to numerous private schools.

The Comprehensive Plan does not address the quality or content of RCPS education or curriculum, as this lies under the purview of the Rockingham County School Board. However, facilities planning is a critical aspect of the Comprehensive Plan to ensure that students continue to have safe, accessible places to learn, and to proactively prevent overcrowding.



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In keeping with Rockingham County's plan for managed growth, RCPS is planning for the most growth in their schools near the Stone Spring Urban Development Area, located in the Spotswood High School and Montevideo Middle School District. Capital Improvement Program projects include expansion of Broadway High School and renovations to McGaheysville and Elkton Elementary Schools, Montevideo Middle School, Spotswood High School, and Massanutten Technical Center. An additional elementary school near the City of Harrisonburg boundary is anticipated by the RCPS Comprehensive Plan 2019-2024. A strategic plan for RCPS is needed to address school capacities and facility needs beyond 2030. This should include population projections by both age group and school district.

Continuing to provide timely renovations and additions to school buildings is necessary to serve a growing and vibrant community. Schools are an important factor in relocation and retention of skilled employees. Planning and flexibility by policymakers is crucial in striking a balance between fiscal rectitude and providing high quality educational facilities.

### Massanutten Technical Center

Massanutten Technical Center (MTC) has served as a Career and Technical Education (CTE) center since 1972. MTC offers over 20 CTE programs for high school students, as well as adult programs such as GED courses and apprenticeships.

### Rockingham Academy

RCPS' Alternative Education program provides seventh through twelfth-grade students with an alternative to their current high school setting. Unique teaching strategies employed by teachers and counselors enable students to succeed regardless of the obstacles encountered in their educational career or personal lives.

### Map 4.5 | Public Schools and School Districts

[This map can be found in the Chapter 4 Map Package]

Table 4.5 | RCPS School Facilities

RCPS Schools: Age, Capacity and Enrollment as of January 31, 2023				
Schools: High Schools	Year Constructed	Acreage	Effective Capacity	Current Enrollment
Broadway	1997	55	1,018	893
East Rockingham	2010	70	1,248	759
Spotswood	1979, 1997	109	1,016	932



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Turner-Ashby	1959, 2002	54	1,262	996
Massanutten Technical Center				
Rockingham Academy	2015	4	211	<i>included above</i>
Schools: Middle Schools	Year Constructed/Expanded		Effective Capacity	Current Enrollment
Elkton	1957, 1985, 2006	22	610	623
J. Frank Hillyard	1952, 1959, 1988, 2007	28	940	670
Montevideo	1950, 1965, 2006	23	716	619
Wilbur S. Pence	1956, 1959, 1962, 2000, 2007	20	976	667
Schools: Elementary Schools	Year Constructed/Expanded		Effective Capacity	Current Enrollment
Cub Run	2006	13	800	691
Elkton	1938, 1972, 1995	5	620	260
Fulks Run	1981, 2000, 2002, 2020	20	306	123
John C. Myers	1963, 1976, 1998, 2021	20	578	458
John Wayland	1966, 1969, 1986, 2018	25	646	486
Lacey Spring	1989	20	392	216
Linville Edom	1939, 1993	6	222	162
McGaheysville	1934, 1969, 1995	16	402	219
Mountain View	2000	20	584	375
Ottobine	1956, 1987, 2002, 2012	7	308	174
Peak View	2001	25	584	506
Plains	1972, 2007	20	602	411
Pleasant Valley	1983, 1987, 2018	13	376	209
River Bend	2008	20	584	321
South River	1994	19	424	299

### Parks and Recreation

Parks and recreational amenities are closely tied to high quality of life and community prosperity. These amenities bolster the County as an attractive home base for potential employers and employees and drive home sales and investment. As Rockingham County's population growth continues over the next twenty years, more facilities will be needed to match the associated rise in demand while keeping the County competitive for jobs and economic growth.

The mission of the Rockingham County's Recreation Department is to foster lifetime involvement in and appreciation of activities that enrich the lives of all County residents by providing high quality recreation and leisure activities. Public demand is increasing for programs and facilities to serve the growing population and active community at all age group levels (see Table 4.7). Throughout community engagement, community members



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expressed a love for Rockingham County's current recreational facilities and identified the need for additional facilities including ball fields, walking, and biking trails, indoor recreational facilities, and boat launches.

The County does not currently own indoor recreational space, partnerships with RCPS and various Town facilities make it possible to provide youth, adult, and senior programming. Additionally, construction of a proposed indoor recreation facility at Rockingham Park is identified in the most recent CIP and would provide opportunities to better serve the community while creating the potential to host revenue-generating tournaments and sporting events.

The incorporated Towns throughout Rockingham County also provide a variety of recreational programming opportunities open to County residents. Additionally, natural areas, trails, and outdoor amenities are abundant in Rockingham County and the Shenandoah Valley including Virginia State Parks, Shenandoah National Park, Skyline Drive, and the George Washington and Jefferson National Forest. These existing amenities and partnerships can be the backbone of a diverse, robust, and fiscally responsible investment in growing the County's parks and recreational amenities. New investments should incorporate planning best practices such as equity and access, cohesion with the County's town and country land use pattern, and emphasis on community and public health.

Table 4.6 | Facility Use<sup>2</sup>

Fiscal Year 2022 Parks & Recreation Facility Use	
Programs currently held in shared spaces	20
Facilities controlled by Parks & Recreation	1
Classes currently held in shared spaces	12
Proposed Indoor Recreation Facility potential programs/classes	60
Proposed Indoor Recreation Facility: Additional potential participant capacity	11,000

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<sup>2</sup> Existing programs, classes, and facilities controlled by the Parks and Recreation Department, and the potential for additional programs and annual participation when the anticipated Indoor Recreation Facility is built.





Table 4.7 | Program Participation<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> From 2018 through 2022, 14,675 people participated in programs offered by the Parks and Recreation Department, an average of 2,935 per year, from 74 areas of the County, Commonwealth of Virginia, and other states.



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## Parks & Recreation Program Participation 2018 - 2022

Address	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Totals
Rockingham	628	380	371	473	488	2,340
Harrisonburg	282	354	349	396	428	1,809
Broadway	528	267	248	250	305	1,598
Bridgewater	546	257	257	262	242	1,564
McGaheysville	302	199	199	261	212	1,173
Elkton	304	138	138	283	273	1,136
Dayton	279	128	127	149	126	809
Penn Laird	219	140	141	167	126	793
Timberville	239	123	71	83	126	642
Grottoes	206	99	98	102	134	540
Mount Crawford	102	67	66	100	96	431
Port Republic	81	24	24	40	30	199
Linville	57	24	21	37	42	181
Fulks Run	62	13	13	25	27	140
Weyers Cave	56	15	15	27	26	139
Keezletown	51	10	13	38	24	136
Shenandoah	41	16	16	25	35	133
Singers Glen	53	15	16	16	17	117
Hinton	54	9	9	15	10	97
Staunton	23	15	15	29	11	93
New Market	20	16	14	20	14	84
Bergton	28	11	9	9	8	65
Mount Solon	19	11	11	2	6	49
Mount Jackson	12	8	4	10	9	43
Total participation of 74 addresses 2018 - 2022*	4,192	2,339	2,245	2,819	2,815	14,675

This table lists the 24 addresses with the highest participation numbers out of a total of 74. Complete data from all 74 addresses is reflected in the totals. The remaining 50 addresses had a total of 364 participants.

Out of state participants total 32.

Unspecified addresses in Virginia total 31.

Addresses listed are U.S. Post Office addresses, so the City and Town addresses can be in the County, Towns, and/or City.

\*In 2018 a 5k race had 1,156 participants. The 5k was not held 2019 - 2021. While programs differ each year, 2020 - 2022 programs were limited by the COVID-19 pandemic.



### Rockingham Park at the Crossroads

Rockingham Park at the Crossroads is a centralized 65-acre facility located off Spotswood Trail near Penn Laird. The vision for the Park is to be a local and regional destination for athletes, recreation enthusiasts, and park goers of all ages. The park features a baseball/softball complex with two 250' fields and two 300' fields. The park also **features concessions**, pavilions, and restrooms, a playground, and prominent views of Massanutten Mountain. The multipurpose field complex incorporates four athletic fields. Open space surrounding each field allows for additional seating. A natural stream corridor also runs through the property. To make this park more accessible to surrounding neighborhoods, new pedestrian connections are needed to the surrounding residential areas.

While the Park is operating in 2022, it will continue to be built according to the Rockingham Park Master Plan over the coming years. The Rockingham Park Master Plan includes a state-of-the-art indoor recreation and competitive sports center and an amphitheater. The completion of this facility will greatly increase access to recreation for area residents. Furthermore, the ability to host regional athletic events that attract participants, spectators, and visitors from across the region and beyond will benefit the County by generating revenue from outside the County.

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### Trails

Community engagement input for *PLANROCKINGHAM* revealed a strong desire for more trails and bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure throughout the County.

The International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA) designated the Harrisonburg-Rockingham area as a Bronze Ride Center in 2011. The designation represents IMBA's recognition of large-scale mountain biking opportunities for every rider. Trails are maintained through partnerships between Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation, the Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Coalition (SVBC), U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service, Massanutten Resort, many volunteers, and other regional land managers. The Massanutten Western Slope Trail System is located on private resort property and includes over 15 miles of hiking and mountain biking trails. The most extensive trail systems in the area can be found in Shenandoah National Park and the George Washington and Jefferson National Forest, with many miles of public trails. However, trailheads in these locations are in the most rural areas of the County and mostly accessible via car, and the parks are seasonal in nature with limited accessibility during the winter months.

The Shenandoah Rail Trail is a much-anticipated amenity that is proposed to run approximately 50 miles between Broadway and Front Royal along an abandoned Norfolk Southern rail corridor. Funding to acquire the 48.5-mile unused rail corridor was provided by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation's Land and Water Conservation Fund in 2022. The Trail is a partnership of localities and organizations from Rockingham County to Warren County. This will provide a valuable passive recreational opportunity for County residents and tourists alike and will provide an economic boost to the County due to an influx of visitors from around Virginia and beyond. The Rail Trail is discussed in further detail in Chapter 8 of this Plan.

The Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission (CSPDC) administers a Bicycle and Pedestrian Program that operates through the Harrisonburg Rockingham Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) and the Rural Transportation Program. The Program assists in the planning, programming, construction, and marketing of bicycle and pedestrian resources throughout the region. See Chapter 8 of this Plan for additional information.

### Community Centers

The County-owned Community Centers present opportunities to provide space for recreational programs and uses including but not limited to healthcare clinics, daycare,



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mini-libraries, and food pantries. These community-centric properties are ideal locations for the provision of public space and services close to home, thereby reducing traffic and transportation needs. However, for the Centers to house certain uses (such as daycare) the buildings would need improvements to achieve current building code standards. Continuing formalized partnerships with community organizations to manage and maintain the community centers will provide valuable spaces close to home.

Table 4.8 | Community Centers

Community Centers			
Name	Location	Center Description	Current Use
Bergton Community Center	17784 Criders Road, Bergton	8 acres with a playground, basketball court, softball field, walking track, picnic tables & shelters. Building with kitchen, all-ppurpose room with stage, 7 classrooms.	Mini-library; resdients host group activities, social, and other events.
Plains District Community Center	233 McCauley Drive, Timberville	Activity room with billiards, air hockey, video and pinball games, 3 meeting rooms, multi-purpose room, kitchen.	Community meeting place and recreation center. "Strike Zone" location operated by Broadway/Timberville Little League.
Singers Glen Community Center	9410 Singers Glen Road, Singers Glen	Baseball & softball fields & picnic tables. Gymnasium, kitchen, dining room, meeting rooms.	Residents host group activities, social, and other events. Currently managed by Singers Glen Ruritans.

### Libraries

Rockingham County is part of the Massanutten Regional Library (MRL) system, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization which also serves the City of Harrisonburg, Towns, and Page County. The library system is funded in partnership with the participating localities and patron donations. In addition to the Central Library located in downtown Harrisonburg, MRL has four branches in Rockingham County. Services include meeting rooms, notary services, internet access, children's programming, and a variety of other resources and activities to support the community's needs. In addition to MRL, local colleges and universities offer a variety of library services accessible to the community.

A fifth MRL branch is slated for construction at the intersection of U.S. Route 33/Spotswood Trail and VA 276/Cross Keys Road to provide additional services to the central and eastern area of the County. This branch will be the largest branch outside of the Central Library location.

MRL is faced with a variety of operational and programming challenges. Many people who would like to visit the library do not have access to private transportation, including students who could benefit from safe, educational spaces after school. Management training is needed on a regular basis, while MRL struggles to recruit new employees. Simultaneously, in 2023 demand for services is rising, and funding is needed (see Table 4.9). Funding also affects hours of operation and services the system can sustain (see Tables 4.10 and 4.11). Combining uses in shared spaces could help MRL to leverage community partnerships to create community hubs in underserved areas. Community hubs might include a library, clinic, daycare, and/or a foodbank.

Table 4.9 | Library Funding Comparisons



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### 2021 Library Per Capita Funding Comparisons

Virginia Average	\$35.37
Central Rappahannock Regional Library	\$42.51
Staunton Public Library	\$43.88
Massanutten Regional Library	\$14.13

Source: Massanutten Regional Library

Table 4.10 | Library Branches in Rockingham County

Massanutten Regional Library Branches in Rockingham County	
Branch	Location
Elkton Community Library	106 N. Terrace Ave, Elkton
Grottoes Branch Library	601 Dogwood Ave, Grottoes
North River Library	118 Mt. Crawford Ave, Bridgewater
Village Library	175 North Main Street, Broadway
Central MRL Branch Library*	174 South Main Street, Harrisonburg
*Central Branch is located in the City of Harrisonburg	

Table 4.11 | Library System Data

Fiscal Year 2022 MRL System Data	
Items borrowed	589,524
Reference questions answered	24,227
Return on investment*	\$1 : \$8.31
Door counts Rockingham only*	168,790
*ROI is calculated as the return on every 1 dollar invested	
*Door counts = number of visitors to libraries	
Source: Massanutten Regional Library	

## Healthcare

Regional health and medical facilities and care are provided by private and nonprofit organizations in Harrisonburg and Rockingham County. As identified in Chapter 2, public health factors data shows the need for improved patient to doctor ratios for primary care, dentists, and mental health providers. Working with regional partners, the County will explore ways to work with regional, state, and federal partners to provide additional care options, and work with these partners to identify any medically underserved areas or populations.

Sentara RMH Medical Center is a 238-bed hospital located in Rockingham County, serving a population of over 218,000 residents in the Shenandoah Valley. The medical center offers



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behavioral health, cancer care, heart and vascular services, emergency medicine, maternity services, women's health, neurology, orthopedics, pulmonology, wound healing, and weight loss surgery. For trauma-related or life-threatening injuries, patients are transported via air to the University of Virginia Medical Center in Charlottesville. Several Sentara satellite locations around the County, along with other urgent and primary care providers, also provide valuable, localized opportunities for care.

### Social Services

Rockingham County residents are served by the joint Harrisonburg Rockingham Social Services District, located at 110 North Mason Street in the City of Harrisonburg. Services offered are divided into two broad program areas. The Benefits Program provides medical, financial, fuel, and food stamp assistance to City and County residents. The Service Program oversees adult and child protection services, adoption and foster care, and employment services. Additional office and service space is needed to meet growing demand. A space needs study for the District's offices will help identify and address current and projected demand for services. The County will continue to collaborate with the City of Harrisonburg to reduce costs and provide services to County residents.



## GOAL, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES

### Goal Statement

*Rockingham County provides quality public facilities, services, and infrastructure in a sustainable, efficient, and fiscally responsible manner.*

### 1. Meet the Infrastructure Needs of a Growing Community

#### 1.1 Ensure safe and adequate public water and sewer infrastructure.

- 1.1.1 Work with Harrisonburg-Rockingham Regional Sewer Authority (HRRSA) to identify opportunities for HRRSA to assume ownership of sewer transmission systems in the City of Harrisonburg and member Towns to better serve adjacent areas in the County to include areas planned for growth. to create a joint water and sewer master plan that identifies current system needs and targets long-term strategies to maintain and potentially expand public water and sewer systems to support areas planned for growth.
- 1.1.2 Explore creating a water authority to consolidate and improve water and sewer services provided by localities and infrastructure.
- 1.1.3 Work with regional partners to upgrade and develop necessary infrastructure to meet the County's long-term water supply demand needs and the needs of other localities.
- 1.1.4 Conduct a comprehensive study to map groundwater resources and identify strategies for their continued protection.
- 1.1.5 Review and amend the Zoning Ordinance as needed to eliminate reduce or conditionally permit uses that would adversely the impact of development on karst aquifer resources.

#### 1.2 Create more sustainable and environmentally safe solid waste management practices.

- 1.2.1 Explore new methods to engage and educate the community on recycling and waste reduction efforts.
- ~~1.2.1~~ 1.2.2 Continue and enhance recycling efforts at the County landfill and collection sites to reduce landfill flows.
- ~~1.2.2~~ 1.2.3 Consider the acquisition of property adjacent to the current landfill site for future expansion needs.
- ~~1.2.3~~ 1.2.4 Maintain and enhance the Public Works Department's annual developing a 230-year needs assessment for projection of solid waste operations, including revenues and expenses, and landfill space, and closure maintenance needs and to identify best management practices for reducing waste to project required tipping fees.





~~1.2.4 Further support waste management and recycling planning through cost-effective and environmentally safe approaches.~~

1.3 Improve telecommunications infrastructure.

1.3.1 Continue ~~to support efforts to make broadband service available to homes and businesses in the County, of the County's partnership with broadband and electric service providers to ensure the success of the universal fiber to the home project by the targeted completion date.~~

1.3.2 Continue to evaluate the siting of telecommunications structures to improve cellular service and coverage, ~~with a preference for collocation and attached structures. Evaluate the need for Zoning Ordinance amendments to facilitate service provision.~~

## **2. Provide Services and Amenities that Enhance Quality of Life**

~~2.1 Improve communication with and access to County information.~~

~~2.1.0 As more residents obtain broadband access, evaluate new, technology based methods of regular communication with citizens.~~

~~2.4.2~~ 2.2 Ensure parks and recreation meet the demand of a growing community.

~~2.4.1~~ 2.2.1 Consider a Parks and Recreation master plan for the County to identify any gaps in service provision and plan for opportunities to expand recreation across the community.

~~2.4.2~~ 2.2.2 Further integrate accessibility and safety into future parks and facility design to provide recreational spaces that are safe and inclusive for users of all ages and abilities.

~~2.4.3~~ 2.2.3 Continue community partnerships, and establish new partnerships where needed, to support programming, amenities, and maintenance of existing recreational facilities.

~~2.4.4~~ 2.2.4 Consider additional County-owned properties that could be used for passive or active recreational facilities.

~~2.4.5 Expand the use of the County's community centers to provide facilities and bolster programming for the Parks and Recreation Department.~~

~~2.4.6~~ 2.2.5 Work with the incorporated Towns and the City of Harrisonburg to continue the provision of recreation facilities and programs in a regionally advantageous and cost-effective manner.

~~2.4.7~~ 2.2.6 Continue to implement the Master Plan for Rockingham Park at the Crossroads.

~~2.4.7 Continue partnerships with community centers to provide additional opportunities and programs.~~

2.3 Support and improve education and educational resources.



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- 2.3.1 Work with Rockingham County Public Schools to develop a strategic plan that analyzes school enrollment, capacity, and school age population growth projections per school district to plan for school capacity and facility needs over the next twenty years.
- 2.3.2 Work with Rockingham County Public Schools to establish ways to utilize school property for year-round use and recreation by County residents.
- 2.3.3 Continue to support the Massanutten Regional Library system.
- 2.4 Expand access to social services and healthcare offerings.
  - 2.4.1 Continue to encourage healthcare facilities where appropriate.
  - 2.4.2 Work with the Virginia Department of Health and other regional partners to identify community health needs.
  - 2.4.3 Continue to collaborate with the City of Harrisonburg to provide social services to County residents.
- 2.5 Improve public safety throughout the County.
  - 2.5.1 Continue to support local first responders to monitor, maintain, and improve service levels.
  - 2.5.2 Ensure that fire and emergency response times meet industry benchmarks.
  - 2.5.3 Ensure that the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Emergency Communications Center is supported to respond to community needs as quickly as possible.
  - 2.5.4 Continue working with the City of Harrisonburg to support the Courts' needs in the best interest of County residents.